A True and Impartial Relation of the Death of M. John Gerhard, *who was beheaded on Tower-hill,* July 10 MDCLIV.

IT was thought needless by the friends of M. *Gerhard* to declare any thing concerning his sufferings to the world more then in their sighs, had not the sacrilegious malice of the last weekly pamphlet thrown some stains upon his name, and so incensed them to a vindication as pious as his death was. 'Tis most certain that there can no blots stick upon true honour, which such weak fellows endeavour against it: These are cursed beasts, but their horns are short; sepulchral dogs, that scrape up graves and violate the dead, and are fierce and ravenous, but yet dogs still. And all worthy people will call their railing praise, and what they intend a barking infamy, the greatest merit. Yet because every understanding is not of the same brightness, and those putrid libels may by ill chance fall into some innocent hand hereafter (and yet sure such vermin should not be endured long) therefore let wise and good men pardon him that hath undertaken this justice for that Gentleman, and be pleased to read this sad story, not for their satisfaction sake, but their sorrows: It may dry up a friendly tear perhaps, and still a murmuring groan to see the comly posture of his passion, how well all was carryed by him, and how honourably, and the honest circumstances may not improbably take off from the sadness. Why should I grieve that death which had such a living glory in it? Or dishonour that blood with feeble tears, which was shed so like the holy Martyrs? All that knew this person cannot but witness his general resolution, and whether his great courage fell less then it self (as that viper hisseth) or did not rather

rise greater now, when the Christian was twisted with the Gentleman, let this faithful relation witness. In which, though all terms and syllables may not be exactly the same, yet if there be a material falshood, or a wilful flattery, may his neck that wrote it feel a viler destiny then axes are or halters. *Amicus* Gerardus, *sed magis amica veritas.*

From the first day of his imprisonment he foresaw the heavie sentence hovering upon him, and therefore gave all diligence to secure himself against it; that however he underwent a temporal condemnation, he might escape an eternal. But after that sad doom was pronounced, then he bestirred himself amain, and made double hast for heaven, It was for his life, and therefore he would lose no minute, but the same night gave directions to a dear friend for a Minister (whom he knew to have long honoured his family) to be brought to him early next morning; and it pleased Authority to gratifie him in this great desire, so that an order was sent freely for the quiet admission of any such person to him. With this spiritual friend he spent some hours every day in prayer, and other ghostly refreshments, which (God be praised) were not without sweet effect and impressions upon his soul. There were some other Ministers of great observation for gravity and godliness in these times, who visited him, and who I am confident will put their seal to this truth with me, that they found him meek, humble, modest, penitent, comforted, and not far from the kingdom of God, if not already in it; but I have good hope he was in possession, and so had he, through grace. Upon the morning (which was the last he must see until that of the Resurrection) he submitted to some wholsom orders of the Church, and received her comforts by them. That done, he proceeded to (the highest enjoyment of grace that can be administred upon earth) the holy Communion, whereof with his brother Sir *Gilbert Gerard* he was a partaker, with as much reverence, zeal, thankfulness, holy sorrows, and holy joys, as a devout soul could evidence. He wept as if he would have washed his Saviours wounds, which his faith presented, in his tears; and yet he said he was admirably ravished with all inward peace and comfort in his own conscience. This passed, he had now nothing to do but to dy, which he expected that morning very speedily;

M. *Bond.*
M. *Caryl*

ſpeedily ; But by the pleaſure of Authority, both the time and the place of his execution was altered, ſo that he was to wait a little longer, until evening, for his releaſe. Many friends and perſons of Honour came to take their laſt leave of him, who can gladly witneſs his undiſturb'dneſs and civil cheerfulneſs to every one of them. His brother tarryed continually with him, and they ate together; and though ſome eruptions of paſſion could not be reſtrained now and then, where nature was ſo much concerned, yet they were generally pleaſant, and at laſt parted (about half an hour before he was led forth to death) with as much calmneſs and placidneſs, as if they had been to meet again anon ſafe and unhurt, as they had done formerly. So have I ſeen a windy and ſtormy day conclude in ſtilneſs and Sun-ſhine, as if weary and deſiring to reſt without any breath of trouble, The Miniſter only waiting on him to the laſt ; and about five a clock enters the Lieut. of the Tower, and the Sherif of London ; Two ſure friends, that will not leave him as long as he hath life remaining in him : They told him a ſowr meſſage, that they were come to conduct him to his death's blow: He reply'd they were very welcom, and received them ſo fearleſs and untroubled, that the Sherif told the Miniſter, *He was ſorry to ſee him ſo unfit for that condition*; but (under favour) he miſtook his condition. That which he accounted fitneſs to dy, our Pamphlet-monger would have called flagging and cowardiſe. So hard a thing it is to ſatisfie all curioſities, even with our blood, and nothing more ingenious then to carry this bitter cup even, when ſo many miſconſtructions ſhake it. At his lodging he deſired the Sherif that he would permit the Miniſter and three others that were his friends and ſervants to go upon the Scaffold with him ; which as it was a ſeaſonable wiſdom in him to deſire, ſo was it a fortunate kindneſs from them that granted it, elſe it may be their teſtimony might have been wanting to his injured reputation. He took leave particularly of the houſhold where he was a priſoner, and was ſo clearly collected in every thing he did, that he went out of his way into the kitchin to bid his Landlady farewel, giving thanks for her reſpects during his bonds, which he ſaid he ſhould dy in to her. As he paſſed by the Guards in the Tower, he gave them money twice, and told them, he

ſhould trouble them no longer, being on his remove to better guards. He walked along to the Scaffold on Tower-hil, ſhewing a great deal both of humility and reſpect to the people, who generally lamented him, and prayed for him. As he went he was bare-headed for the moſt part, carrying his hat in his hand, and ſomtimes reſting it in a careleſs bravery on his left ſide. When he came to (or rather leap'd upon) the Scaffold (for he was ſo far from flagging when to tread that Tragical Stage, that many obſerv'd how ſprightfully he ſeem'd to skip up the ſteps to it, as if he had gone to dance there rather then to dy) his grim executioner preſented himſelf to him, to whom with a cheerful ſmile he ſaid, *Welcome honeſt friend*; And deſiring to ſee his Ax, he took it into his hands, and kiſſing it, with a pretty glance of his eye (which was a natural lovelineſs in him) towards the Miniſter, he ſaid, *This will do the Deed I warrant it.* The Scaffold was very much crowded with people, yet as well as he could he made ſome turns too and fro upon it, with a paper (which he had taken out of his pocket) in his hand, wherein it ſeems he had prepared ſome heads of a ſpeech which he intended to have delivered; but the Sherif and Lieutenant told him, if he ſpoke any thing, it muſt be very brief, and that they muſt not ſuffer him to ſpeak any thing that was ſeditious; *Well Gentlemen* (ſaid he) *your will be done*; *but* (*God be praiſed*) *I never yet had to do with any thing that was ſeditious! I would fain have ſpoken ſomthing to clear my ſelf to the world, according to the cuſtom, if it might have been: But come Sir*, ſays he, turning to the Miniſter, *Let you and I ſpeak to him that will give us leave:* and ſo kneeling down together in a corner of the ſtage, the Miniſter pray'd with him a ſhort time, which done, they ſtood up again. Then turning himſelf to the people, and putting off his hat, he told them, *That he was not permitted to ſpeak a few words according to his intention, yet he doubted not but what he would have ſaid would come to their eys, though it muſt not come to their ears: But this I deſire all to take notice of,* (and this he ſpoke with a double vehemence) *that I dy a faithful ſubject and ſervant to K.* Charls *the* 2d, *whom I pray God to bleſs, and reſtore to his Rights; and had I ten thouſand thouſand lives, I would gladly lay them all down thus for his ſervice.*

Here

Here he was interrupted and the Sherif wiſhed him rather to confeſs what he knew concerning the horrid plot he was condemned for? He anſwered, *That he had confeſſed all that he knew concerning any Plot: that he thought they knew more of the Plot that condemn'd him, then he did; but he heartily forgave them.* The Miniſter told him, it was well done to forgive and pardon thoſe that perſecute us: That was an act of true Chriſtian love, but as his caſe ſtood, love was not enough; He ought to deal in this buſineſs (upon which his life lay) with all candour and ſincerity, not concealing any thing of that nature as was charged againſt him, as far as he might glorifie God and ſerve the publick good. Upon which, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, and laying his hand upon his breaſt, *Oh Sir,* ſays he, *if there had been any ſuch thing in this breaſt, would I not have revealed it before this time! I proteſt in the ſight of Almighty God, I know no more of any ſuch deſign, but only what I have often acknowledged, that it was motioned to me by* Henſhaw, *(who I confidently believe is in their hands) and debated twice or thrice when I was with him: but I never entertained it at all, and at the laſt flatly diſown'd it, and told him I would have nothing to do in it. He was many times preſſing me to nominate what perſons I knew I could bring, and to have their names; but let them ſhow any ſuch thing if they can againſt me. But I am certain he is in their hands.* Pawſing here a little, and fetching a turn or two on the Scaffold, being very hot (as he had been all that morning) he call'd for ſome ſmall beer, which he had given order to be ready, and was brought thither in a ſtone bottle, of which he drank a little once or twice. Then the Miniſter went to him, and minded him that ſomething might be expected from him as to his Religion, and diſpoſition to dye. To which (gathering up an extraordinary reſolution in his face) he replyed. *I dye a Chriſtian, a true Chriſtian, according to that Faith and Religion, which was profeſſed by the Church of* England *in the time of our late King of bleſſed memory. And I praiſe God I am ſo fitted and ready to dye, that I am confident by the merits of Chriſt Jeſus, that my ſins are pardoned, and my ſalvation is at hand.* Then turning about he called for his waſtcoat and cap, and throwing of his doublet put them on, whilſt his ſervants helped to put up his hair. His waſtcoat was not very clean, which he took notice of to his man: *but 'tis no great matter ſaid he, if the*

heart

heart be clean all's well enough. Being thus prepar'd, he calls for the Block: and viewing it (as with delight) laid himself down upon it, to see how it would fit, and was so far from sinking at the sight of it, that he almost play'd with it: and rising quickly pulls a little paper book out of his pocket, which he gave to the Minister, willing him to finde that particular Prayer which was proper for that occasion, but the crowd being great, he could not quickly finde it, so that he kneeled down with the book open a while in his hand as if he had read; but quickly shut it, and prayed with great expressions of fervency by himself. When he had done the Lievetenant said something to him (as it seems) concerning his Brother *Charles* that had witnessed against him; I know not what the Lievetenant said, (for he spake low) but Mr. *Gerard* spake aloud, and replyed passionately, *Oh Christ Sir! I love my poor brother with all my heart! he is but a youth and was terrified: I know how he was dealt with; tell him I love him as well as ever I lov'd him in my life. And commend me to my brother Sir* Gilbert, *whose releasa I beseech you Sir to assist: there being no more cause, that I know of for his imprisonment then onely that he was found in the same bed with me, which sure is no capital crime.* Having said this, he took his leave with him, and the Sheriff, and all he knew on the Stage: and turning about once more to the people, desired them to pray for him, himself kneeling down with the Minister, laid his hand in his bosom, and they prayed together the last time. After this he bids them all farewel again, *and besought them to remember they had a poor Soveraign abroad who deserved to be remembred.* Then forgiving the Executioner, and saluting the Minister with his last embrace and kisses, he bow'd himself to the stroak of death, with as much Christian meeknes and noble courage mix'd together, as I believe was ever seen in any that had bled upon that Altar. And this all the people that were Spectators, did seem to understand and acknowledge: beholding his fatal blow with a universal sadnes and silence; whereas, when the other Gentleman fell quickly, after upon another score of bloud and ryot, they gave a great and general shout, as applauding the Justice of the *Portugals* death; but pitying and bewailing the untimely fal of so brave and magnanimous a spirit, as did (through all the clouds of death) shine gloriously in this unfortunate Gentleman.

His

His Speech.

Gentlemen,

AS this kind of ſpectacle is no new entertainment to your eys, for you have had a late glut of ſuch objects: So is it no ſtrange thing to me to be made ſuch a ſpectacle; for I have been bred upon the Theater of death, and have learned that part ſo well, though I confeſs a very hard one, as to perform it pretty handſomly, both as becomes a Gentleman, and a Chriſtian.

Only I muſt deſire you to expect no fine Prologue, or Speech from me; I never ſtudied to make Orations: a very unfit man to lay plots againſt a State, who am ſcarce able to lay a few lines of plain Engliſh together, as I ought: But though I cannot ſpeak happily, I doubt not but I ſhall dy happily.

I confeſs my ſelf a great ſinner, Who is innocent? God be merciful to me a miſerable ſinner. I adore the juſtice of God in all this that is come upon me: I have deſerved to dy long ſince; and bleſſed be God who hath given me ſuch time to prepare. But for this Crime I ſtand condemned for to day, I do proteſt mine own innocency, as to any conſent or engagement to act in it.

I hope you will believe me, when you conſider upon what ſlender proofs and teſtimonies I ſuffer; none of them legal, or poſitive, but circumſtantial.

For my Brother Charls, *Alas poor youth! how he was wrought upon! But I deſire all my friends to think honourably of him.*

For my Brother Sir Gilbert,

This imagination of a Plot is ſaid to have been hatched in France, *but I fear the neſt was at* Whitehall.

As for the King,---ſo far from concurring to ſuch a Deed, that I am only unſatisfied in this, whether I ſhall dy right in his favour, becauſe ſuſpected of any thing ſo unworthy of him.

I fear he loſt his Kingdom by ſuch practiſes; but whether he would recover them ſo, is a queſtion: God hath better ways when it ſhall be good in his ſight to plead his cauſe.

I was lately in France, *but on mine own ſcore; for I have commanded there, and probably might.*

For

For my past life it hath been but a troubl some one, but now I hope I shall rest! Since I was any thing, I have served the King, as I was bound: And I wish all that did so, had done it as faithfully! He was condemned for a Tyrant, but God----

For my Religion, though a Souldier, I am able to profess I am a Christian Souldier, a true Son of the Church of England, *as constituted under Q.* Elizabeth, K. James, *and* K. Charls *of blessed memory. Her Doctrine and Government I embr. ce: Her Truth and Peace I pray God to restore.*

I humbly give thanks to God Almighty for providing me the comfort of a Minister, on whose fidelity I might repose my soul.

And I pray God to bless the poor faithful Ministers of this Church, and give you hearts to esteem them; the want whereof is no small cause of our misery.

My days have been few and evil, yet God be blessed in all the vanities and folly of youth, I have been far from Atheisme, or contempt of Gods worship; I had alwaies awful impressions of Gods honour and service; which is now my comfort.

And now dear Countrymen fare you well, I pray God bless you all, this whole Nation.

Alas poor England! *When will these black days be over! When will there be blood enough! I wish mine might fill up the measure. I forgive all.*

Once more fare you well; Commend me to all my friends, Pray for me.

I pray God make you as faithful and loyal as I have lived, and as happy as I shall be by and by when I am dead.

Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Father of mercies have mercy on me!

Saviour of the world, save my soul.

O Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, hear my prayers!

Into thy hands O Lord I commend my Spirit.

Lord Jesus receive my soul.

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